

Amendments to the Specification:

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 10, line 8, with the following redlined paragraph:

The sixth table row involves a rule wherein content switching is based on the extensible markup language (XML) tag present in the packet. XML information may be present in the packet in a location different from the HTTP header. An embodiment of a technique to use content switching based on XML content in a packet is disclosed in U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/731,979 (Attorney Docket No. 350078.412), entitled "METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR LOAD BALANCING BASED ON XML CONTENT IN A PACKET," filed concurrently herewith on December 10, 2003, with inventor Anilkumar Gunturu, assigned to the same assignee as the present application, and incorporated herein by reference in its entirety.

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 17, line 1, with the following redlined paragraph:

At a block 404, conversion of nested rules into their sum of products or "minterm" representation is performed. In this minterm form, a nested rule is broken down into a set of minterms summed together. Although the nested rule may have both "&" and "|" operators, each minterm will have only the "&" operator. For example if r_n is a nested rule, and r_a , r_b , and r_c are simple rules satisfying the relation $r_n = (r_a | r_b) \& r_c$, the nested rule r_n can also be represented as $r_n = (r_a \& r_c) | (r_a \& \neg r_c)(r_b \& r_c)$. The minterms of the nested rule r_n are thus $(r_a \& r_c)$ and $(r_a \& \neg r_c)(r_b \& r_c)$. These minterms may be placed in a minterm table or other suitable data structure.